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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 002789

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [CT](#) [PU](#) [GV](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIAL DISCUSSES CAR, GUINEA-BISSAU, GUINEA

REF: A. PARIS 2725

[1](#)B. PARIS 2726

Classified By: Acting DCM Josiah Rosenblatt for reason 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) MFA DAS-equivalent for West Africa Bruno Foucher discussed his portfolios with Africa Watcher on April 20. Ref A reports his discussion of Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso; Ref B reports his remarks on Togo. Foucher offered brief comments on other countries his office oversees.

[1](#)2. (C) CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: Foucher agreed that General Kolingba's recently stated "price" for supporting a candidate in the next round of CAR presidential elections was outrageous. Foucher expressed concern about the pre-election climate, remarking on the general lack of funds in all sectors of the economy. He noted possible EU help with a paving project, salaries from which could inject cash into the economy. He was not optimistic, however, that much could be done quickly to bolster the CAR economy. Foucher said that, while GOF training of the gendarmerie had ended, France's military contribution to CEMAC's FOMUC, which was receiving EU funding, would likely continue. He predicted a one-year renewal on June 30. Foucher expressed concern about cross-border activity by the Jinjaweed militia groups and the risk of refugee flows from Sudan.

[1](#)3. (C) GUINEA-BISSAU: Foucher, saying that he was "worried" about Guinea-Bissau, commented briefly on former President Kumba Yala's presidential ambitions. Foucher said that Kumba Yala enjoyed the support of Senegal's President Wade, who was grateful for Yala's cooperation with Senegal over the Casamance separatists. Guinea-Bissau had not allowed them to enter Guinea-Bissau, with many decamping to Sierra Leone instead. When asked about whether Portugal had taken a position on Yala's candidacy, Foucher said that the Portuguese had not. (NOTE: The GOF is likely to take its lead from the Portuguese on Guinea-Bissau. END NOTE.)

[1](#)4. (C) GUINEA: Foucher described GOF efforts to accelerate engagement with Guinea, which he said were meeting resistance from within the EU, although Guinea did not carry the same baggage at the EU as did Togo, on which Germany takes a hard line. France would like to restart economic cooperation. Foucher mentioned "envelope B," which could make possible a total of over 100 million euros in credit, and "envelope A," which could be used to support elections. Foucher mentioned briefly French work with the IFIs on Guinea. He noted that Guinea's Prime Minister met recently with GOF Minister-Delegate for Cooperation Darcos and explained Guinea's need for assistance.
WOLFF